

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A method of reducing inflammation or infection of a mucosal membrane, comprising:  
contacting a problem area of the mucosal membrane with a therapeutically effective amount of one or more antimicrobial metals in a crystalline form to provide a localized anti-inflammatory effect, wherein the one or more antimicrobial metals are characterized by sufficient atomic disorder, such that the metal, in contact with an alcohol or water-based electrolyte, releases atoms, ions, molecules, or clusters of at least one antimicrobial metal at a concentration sufficient to provide a localized anti-inflammatory effect.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more antimicrobial metals further provide a localized antimicrobial effect.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the mucosal membrane is one or more of the oral cavity, the nasal, bronchial, pulmonary, trachea and pharynx airways, the otic and ophthalmic surfaces, the urogenital system, including the prostate, the reproductive system and the gastrointestinal tract, including the colon and rectal surfaces.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the mucosal membrane is the oral cavity, the nasal, bronchial, pulmonary, trachea and pharynx airways, the urogenital system, including the prostate, the reproductive system and the gastrointestinal tract, including the colon and rectal surfaces.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline and is formed with sufficient atomic disorder such that, in contact with an alcohol or water-based electrolyte, the antimicrobial metal releases ions, atoms, molecules or clusters of the antimicrobial metal on a sustainable basis.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the antimicrobial metal is selected from the group consisting of silver, gold, platinum and palladium.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver, formed as a composite with oxygen.

9. (Original) The method of claim of claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial metal is delivered as a powder, aerosol, spray or mist to the oral cavity, or to an area of the nasal, bronchial, pulmonary, trachea or pharynx airways to treat a respiratory disorder.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver delivered as an aerosol, wherein the aerosol has a droplet size which is less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , and wherein the concentration of silver in the aerosol is in the range of 40 to 500 Fg/ml.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the aerosol does not contain particulates sized larger than 2  $\mu\text{m}$ .

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the aerosol does not contain particulates sized larger than 1  $\mu\text{m}$ .

13. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the one or more antimicrobial metals are provided as a coating on, or filler in, a dressing, substrate or patch, or in a pharmaceutical composition with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers suitable for application to the mucosal membrane.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the pharmaceutical composition includes a nanocrystalline powder of the one or more antimicrobial metals, or a liquid containing dissolved species from a nanocrystalline powder or coating of the one or more antimicrobial metals.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is a one or more of a gel, cream, lotion, paste, ointment, foam, suppository, lozenge, gum, tablet, capsule, or wafer containing the antimicrobial metal powder in an amount of 0.01 - 10 % by weight, or one or more of a liquid formulated as a topical solution, aerosol, instillation, infusion, spray, mist, drops, syrup, elixir, mouth wash, or retention enema containing 0.001 - 10 % by weight of the antimicrobial metal.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the mucosal membrane is contacted to treat a respiratory disorder, a disease or condition of the oral cavity, a gastrointestinal disorder, a nasal disorder, or a disorder of the urogenital or reproductive system.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the antimicrobial metal is silver, formed as a composite with oxygen.

19. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the dressing or pharmaceutical composition is fixed in place or occluded with an occlusive or semi-occlusive layer which maintains the dressing or composition in a moist condition.

20 (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the one or more antimicrobial metals are provided in a hydrated or hydrocolloid-containing dressing, or in a pharmaceutical composition with one or more hydrocolloids.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the hydrocolloid is one or more of cellulose and derivatives thereof, starch, glycogen, gelatin, pectin, alginate, chitosan, chitin, gum arabic, locust bean gum, karaya gum, gum tragacanth, ghatti gum, agar-agar, carrageenans, carob gum, guar gum, and xanthan gum.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the hydrocolloid is one or more of carboxymethyl cellulose, alginate, pectin, and glyceryl polymethacrylate.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver, formed as a composite with oxygen.

25. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial metal is in a powder form and is delivered directly to the mucosal membrane.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the powder is sized with particulates no larger than 2  $\mu\text{m}$ .

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein the powder is sized with particulates no larger than 1  $\mu\text{m}$ .

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the antimicrobial metal is nanocrystalline silver, formed as a composite with oxygen.

30-89. (Cancelled).